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Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 7 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit diplomatic notes dated 2 January 2016 (see annex I), and 7 January 2016 (see annex II), of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam addressed to the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ha Noi concerning China's conduct of test flights to the airfield which China had illegally built at Đá Chữ Thập (Fiery Cross Reef) of Viet Nam's Truong Sa (Spratly) Archipelago on 2 January 2016 and on 6 January 2016.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 79 (a).

(*Signed*) **Nguyen** Phuong Nga
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations

16-00330 (E) 140116

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Annex I to the letter dated 7 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Regardless of Viet Nam's protest, on 2 January 2016, China conducted test flights to the airfield which China had illegally built at Đá Chữ Thập (Fiery Cross Reef) of Viet Nam's Truong Sa (Spratly) Archipelago.

China's above-mentioned action has seriously infringed upon Viet Nam's sovereignty over Truong Sa Archipelago. It is contrary to the common understanding reached between high-level Leaders of Viet Nam and China, the Agreement on the Basic Principles Guiding the Settlement of Sea Issues between the two countries, and the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC). This action also does harm to peace and stability in the East Sea (South China Sea), reduces political trust between the two countries and has negative impacts upon the neighbourly relations and good sentiments between Vietnamese and Chinese peoples.

Viet Nam resolutely protests the above-mentioned action by China. We request China to immediately stop and not to repeat similar actions. Instead, China should take concrete and practical actions contributing to maintaining peace, stability, security, safety and freedom of navigation and aviation in the East Sea.

Ha Noi, 2 January 2016

Annex II to the letter dated 7 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On 6 January 2016, two Chinese large aircrafts landed on the airfield that China had illegally built at Đá Chữ Thập (Fiery Cross Reef) of Viet Nam's Truong Sa (Spratly) Archipelago.

Viet Nam, once again, vehemently opposes this action by China, which gravely violates Viet Nam's sovereignty, endangers peace and stability in the region and threatens the security, safety and freedom of navigation and aviation in the East Sea (South China Sea). Viet Nam resolutely requests China to put an immediate end to similar actions, desist from further actions violating Viet Nam's sovereignty over Truong Sa Archipelago, respect relevant regulations in international law and refrain from actions that broaden and aggravate the disputes.

Ha Noi, 7 January 2016